



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

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FROM: Director
Survey and Certification Group
Center for Medicaid and State Operations

SUBJECT: Monthly Quality Indicator Comparison Reports

TO: Associate Regional Administrators, DMSO
State Survey Agency Directors

Beginning on March 28, 2001 an additional MDS quality indicator report became available to facilities and States. This report, the Monthly Quality Indicator Comparison Report, is generated at the end of each month, for each facility within a state that reports MDS data. A sample of the report is attached to this memorandum.

Purpose

The Monthly Quality Indicator Comparison Report was created by HCFA in order to give state personnel and facilities a report that can be selectively released to certain requestors without violating the confidentiality of resident information.

The Facility Quality Indicator Profile Reports, which provide data on the MDS-based quality indicators at a facility level have been available for some time. Because of issues of resident privacy, it has not been permissible to release these reports to requestors such as consumers. The Monthly Quality Indicator Comparison Report contains facility-level information while conforming to privacy rules, thus States and facilities may release these reports if guidelines are followed.

Contents

The Monthly Quality Indicator Comparison Report is based on the same data used to produce the Facility Quality Indicator Profile Report, but the data are presented differently. As can be seen from the attached sample report, the Monthly Quality Indicator Comparison Report contains both state percent and national percent comparison columns. This allows the reviewer to compare the performance for each quality indicator measure to that of the state and of the nation.

The state percent column contains the "percent triggered" for the quality indicator averaged over all facilities within the state. This is an unweighted average, meaning that each facility has an equal impact on the average, regardless of number of residents. The national percent is also an unweighted average. It represents the "percent triggered" for the quality indicator averaged over all the facilities in the nation.

Differences from Facility Quality Indicator Profile Report

Because of concerns with protection of the privacy of residents, some of the data presented on the Facility Quality Indicator Profile Report are not included on the Monthly Quality Indicator Comparison Report. The numerator and denominator used to calculate the percents are not presented on the Monthly Quality Indicator Comparison Report. Additionally, totals are not displayed in instances when the number of residents in a facility is 10 or fewer. Also, if the percent triggered is 90% or greater for any given quality indicator, the exact percent triggered will not be displayed. Instead, a notation indicating that the percent triggered is "greater than or equal to 90%" will be displayed.

Delivery of Report

At the end of every month, the Monthly Quality Indicator Comparison Report is generated for each facility within a state, and is placed in that facility's directory. The report does not allow an option for user-defined dates.

Due to a built-in lag in the data system, the data that appear on the report generated in a given month are based on quality indicators from four months prior. The name of the report text file in the directory reflects this. The file name is MSRmmyyyy.txt, where mmyyyy is the month and year of the data from which the report was created. This date also appears at the top of the report itself.

Release of Report

At this time, Monthly Quality Indicator Comparison Reports can be released to:

- Family members of a facility resident
- Potential facility residents or their family members
- The State ombudsman

Although HCFA has suppressed certain data in order to protect individual privacy, the state and the facilities must be cautious in evaluating requests for these reports and in releasing them:

- These reports should not be released in large batches. The reports were designed to enable individuals with a personal or professional interest in a facility, or a few facilities to have access to quality indicator information at a facility level. An individual requestor should receive reports for no more than five facilities.

- The reports were not meant to be published or to be posted on the internet. States or facilities should not use the reports for these purposes themselves, or release the reports to anyone who intends to publish or post them.
- HCFA strongly recommends that States institute a mechanism to track the release of the reports and to document that recipients are aware of the prohibition on publishing and on internet posting. A suggested form is attached.
- State or facility staff should remind recipients of the reports that the information contained in the report is not a measure of a facility's quality, but is rather an indicator of the potential for quality problems. Recipients should not use these reports alone to draw conclusions about a facility's quality.
- Each recipient of a Monthly Quality Indicator Comparison Report should also receive a copy of the sheet "The Monthly Quality Indicator Comparison Report: Guidelines" (see attached). This sheet will reinforce the purpose of the report and aid recipients in its appropriate use.

Effective Date: The first Monthly Quality Indicator Comparison Reports became available beginning on March 28, 2001.

Training: This information should be shared with the State MDS Coordinators.

/s/

Steven A. Pelovitz

**MONTHLY QUALITY INDICATOR COMPARISON REPORT
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT**

I, _____, acknowledge that
I have received a Monthly Quality Indicator Comparison Report for
_____ (month, year) for the following facilities:

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

I understand that:

- These reports were meant for my personal use and therefore should not be disseminated or shared with anyone who will disseminate them.
- These reports may not be photocopied or reproduced.
- The data contained in these reports may not be published or be posted on the internet.

NAME

DATE

Report released by:

NAME

DATE

MONTHLY QUALITY INDICATOR COMPARISON REPORT GUIDELINES

The Monthly Quality Indicator Comparison Report was created by HCFA to give individuals with either a personal or a professional interest in a specific facility access to facility-level data on quality indicators without violating the confidentiality of the nursing home residents. The report allows comparisons between a specific nursing home and the state, as well as the nation about the proportion of residents with a particular condition.

- The reports will not be released in large batches. One requestor will be given reports for up to five facilities.
- These reports are meant for individual use and therefore should not be disseminated, or shared with anyone who will disseminate them.
- The data in the reports were not meant to be published or to be posted on the internet. Facilities and states have been instructed not to release the reports to anyone who intends to do so.
- The data in these reports are only a starting point in reaching a decision about the quality of a nursing facility. The data should be viewed as measures of the potential for quality problems. There may be a legitimate reason why a facility has higher than average percents on a particular indicator.
- In making decisions about quality of care, it is important to actually visit the nursing home being considered. Information in this report can help decide what type of questions an individual may want to ask on a visit to the nursing home.
- Additional information about individual facilities can be found in the Nursing Home Compare section of the HCFA website www.Medicare.gov. This includes the State inspection results, found in the About the Nursing Home Inspections Results section of this web site.